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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

July 29, 2014

The Honorable Sam Johnson
Chairman, Subcommittee on Social Security
Committee on Ways and Means
B-317 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Chairman Johnson:

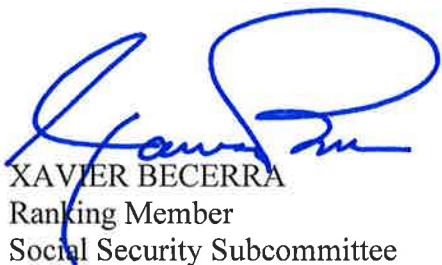
We are writing to urge you to schedule a hearing on Social Security's service delivery budget as soon as possible. As you know, our Subcommittee has a constitutional responsibility (Article 1, Section 8) to oversee Social Security's operations, as well as a moral obligation to ensure that all Americans receive the Social Security they paid for. Our Committee last fulfilled its obligation to assess Social Security's budget more than four years ago, when Democrats chaired the Committee.

For nearly 80 years, the Social Security Administration (SSA) has provided renowned customer service at an extremely cost-effective price – less than one percent of Social Security's annual expenditures go to administrative costs – all without adding a penny to our deficit or our debt. Over its lifetime, Social Security has collected \$17.2 trillion and paid out \$14.4 trillion, accumulating a surplus of \$2.8 billion for future costs and benefit payments.

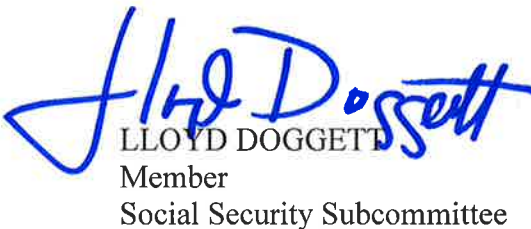
But it is increasingly clear that even Social Security's talented and hard-working employees can't maintain the level of service Americans need and have paid for if Congress fails to do its job. The number of Americans receiving Social Security has grown by more than 10 million over the past decade as the Baby Boom generation has aged. But in 2011, House Republicans slashed SSA's budget, and every year since then, Social Security has received about a billion dollars a year less than it needs to keep up with its rising workload. The funding shortfall has had real consequences for American families – Social Security's local offices have lost more than 10 percent of their staff that serve the public, and that means longer waiting times when Americans visit or call the Social Security office, Social Security office closings, a 20 percent reduction in the hours SSA offices are open to serve the public, and delays in disabled workers receiving their full earned benefits.

The most immediate threat to Social Security is the continued failure of Congress to provide an adequate budget to ensure that all Americans receive the correct benefit, on time and in full. This Subcommittee should avoid any further delay in undertaking its constitutional responsibility to hold oversight hearings on the Social Security Administration's budget. It is our duty to be accountable stewards of Social Security.

Sincerely,



XAVIER BECERRA
Ranking Member
Social Security Subcommittee



LLOYD DOGGETT
Member
Social Security Subcommittee



MIKE THOMPSON
Member
Social Security Subcommittee



ALLYSON SCHWARTZ
Member
Social Security Subcommittee